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ABSTRACT

Years of nursery education are crucial in the language development process of the child. In Nigeria, a nation with over 400 languages, naming a national language for educational and cultural development that foster unity and identity, becomes a sensitive issue. It is argued that government encouragement of private efforts in the provision of pre-primary education has led to commercialization, and that in this context, language skills that schools supply are in a way products that carry price-tags. As such, government policy is an alternative product, and government must change the attitudes of the people in order for its alternative product to be accepted. Eight private nursery schools were consulted for information on clientele, fees payable, quality of staff, and language policy. A socioeconomic description of nursery schools is offered and the nature of language skills' products available to children are discussed with reference to government language policy objectives. A quasi-economic model is provided to move language development in the direction of the ideal defined by the policy. Successful intervention by the government would result in support for multilingualism. (Contains 26 references.) (Author/AA)

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PRICE-TAGGING CHILD BILINGUALISM : AN EVALUATION OF POLICY AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF COMMERCIALISATION OF NURSERY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA .[1]

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PRICE-TAGGING CHILD BILINGUALISM: AN EVALUATION OF POLICY AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF COMMERCIALISATION OF NURSERY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA .[1]

> ...education, often linked with a national language policy, is seen as the best means of breaking down traditional, group, or ethnic loyalties and of creating new, national loyalties .
> Watson, J.K.P. (1984).

Abstract.

Education has been proven to be a relevant factor in national development. We have chosen to use the nursery school in analysing the relationship between national language policy implementation and private participation in the provision of education.

We argue that the years of nursery education are crucial in the language development process of the child. If a nationally beneficial policy is not implemented due to the commercially motivated language curricula that the private schools offer, Government, the Invisible Hand, should focus its intervention on the attitudes and values of the citizens who the proprietors serve. We further argue that the utility value of bilingual competence in the indigenous languages has to be highlighted in order to devalue monolingualism and reorder the socio-economic groupings in society. Finally, we have postulated a new rank order of bilingual possibilities and commented on the socio-political impilcations.

Language Planning, Sociolinguistics, Multilingual Education and Development.

1.0 Introduction

One of the most problematic concerns of government in a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation is moulding a national identity that is representative of and acceptable to all of the component groups. Often, the most that is achievable is a formulation and implementation of identity-promoting policies which are agreeable to the majority and at the same time not overtly threatening to the continued existence of the minority. In a nation like Nigeria with over 400 languages, naming (a) national language(s) for educational and cultural development that foster unity and identity, becomes a highly sensitive issue. Watson's (1984) report of the intricacies of using educational policies to promote cultural pluralism in multi-racial Peninsular Malaysia also tells how explosive the issue can be.

The functions of language as an instructional, interactional, expressive and integrative tool in Nigeria are explicitly stated both in the Constitution of the Federal Republic(1989), and the National Policy on Education(1978). Section 1(8) of the latter states:

> In addition to appreciating the importance of language in the educational process, and as a means of preserving the people's culture, the Government considers it to be in the best interest of national unity that each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major languages other than his own mother tongue. In this connection, the Government considers the three major languages in Nigeria to be Hausa,Igbo and Yoruba.

From this policy statement it can be deduced that the ideal Nigerian should be multi-lingual, that is, possessing communicative skills in his mother tongue, and at least one of Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba. English, which he encounters from the Third Grade of Primary School and throughout his educational career thereafter makes him trilingual.

In October 1991, the language issue in educational planning was the focus of a Seminar organised by the Federal Ministry of Education. The Seminar objective was to address the "considerably complex dimensions" which the language issue was assessed to have assumed. Recommendations from the Seminar stipulate in part :

> Languages in Nigeria should be clearly defined according to their statuses, functions and other contexts of us. For purposes of clarity a

> mother tongue (MT) means the language that the child speaks in his/her home as first language. A second language(L2) could mean English which is one of the official languages in this country. It could also mean any of three major languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) when they are learnt within the formal school system.

This not only re-emphasises the importance of the indigenous languages and of the three major languages particularly, it also raises them to an equal status with English. Also the definition of mother tongue implicitly excludes English from the probable languages in the group. These views are crucial to our discussion of the commercialisation of nursery education in Nigeria. First there is a widespread traditional attitude which sets the English language on a higher pedestal than indigenous Nigerian languages. This is the result of English having served as the language of colonial administration and subsequently as part of the paraphernalia of elitism. Second, within the elite class, English is not only 'the mother tongue' or first language of a substantial number of children, it is in some cases the ONLY language for a long while. Both these observations conflict with government language policy objectives but appear to have promotional value for private nursery schools. The extent to which these schools promote them determines the size and nature of clientele they attract. There is therefore bound to be a slackness in commitment to language policy implementation among private educational institutions.

We argue in part that government encouragement of 'private efforts in the provision of pre-primary education' (See National Policy on Education (NPE) Section 2(11.1)) as with private sector participation in other service industries in the Nigerian economy has led to large scale commercialisation. In the ensuing competition, proprietors employ strategies that enhance increased and 'quality' patronage. The identification of English as the 'prestige medium' in which elite children are brought up has resulted in its being used as the medium of instruction in virtually all privately- owned Nursery Schools contrary to Government intention in NPE Section 2(11.3) to:

> ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community.....

Thus there is currently an alternative ideal to the multilingual one which government policy

pursues. In view of this, the language skills which the schools 'supply' and on the basis of which they can be status-ranked are in a way 'products' which carry price-tags .The value of the tags are a function of consumers' attitudes towards and assessment of the products. Similarly therefore, the acceptance of government policy objective as an alternative product is thus also subject to consumers' attitudes and assessments (See Sumner, 1906). We argue that Government has to change the attitudes of the people in order for its alternative product to be valued rightly and accepted.

For the purpose of this paper, eight private nursery schools in three different socio-economic zones in Lagos were consulted for information on nature of clientele, fees payable, quality of staff and language policy. The information obtained and our observations have been used to present a socio-economic description and categorisation of nursery schools, and the nature of language skills 'products' available to children and their values are discussed with reference to government's language policy objectives. A quasi-economic model[2] is then provided which hopefully would move language development in the direction of the ideal defined by the policy. Finally, the socio-economic and political implications of the model are discussed. In the next section however, an attempt is first made to present the Nursery School as a crucial stage in language development and therefore deserving of greater government attention .

2.0 The Nursery School in Language Development

Several studies justify an assumption that nursery schools are important in monitoring and evaluating language policy implementation. The literature is vast on the advantages of early bilingualism although there have also been a number of claims of the psychological effects of simultaneously learning two languages as a child. The latter have been challenged in more recent and dependable longitudinal research efforts. For instance, Lambert and Tucker's (1972) attitude study of Anglo-Canadian children involved a 4-5 years immersion in French schooling which started with KINDERGARTEN [3]. At the end of immersion, the children 'liked' French people more than those in the control group and their own parents did.

Arsenian(1945:81) includes in his conditions for learning two languages at the same time, the absence of psychological barriers such as affective factors of discriminatory ranking of languages and group suspicion among others. These conditions account for Lambert and Tucker's observation reported above. Similarly, Genesee and Hamayan (1980) report that there is no clear link between attitudes and the second language achievement of Grade 1 Anglo-Canadian pupils. In essence therefore, the nursery school being that stage in education at which children are still malleable, deserves greater monitoring in a nation as intent on fostering national unity and developing the indigenous languages as Nigeria. At this stage bilingualism may be accompanied by biculturalism (Fishman's biculturism 1980) a situation in which the bilingual is also equipped with a knowledge of the socio-cultural systems governing usage in both of his languages making bilingualism more integrative.

Children often go to Nursery School at about Age 3. In some cases where there is a three - tier structure of Play Group - Nursery 1 - Nursery 2, two year olds may be admitted. The three years of nursery education are very important from the point of view of Nigeria's national educational aims:

1) the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
2) the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society;
3) the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around; and
4) the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of his society.

That the nursery schools have a role to play in this regard is confirmed in - Section 2 (10 d, e, f.) of the NPE on purposes of pre-primary education viz:

10 (d) inculcating social norms.

(e) inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, and the local environment ....

(f) teaching co-operation and team spirit ; ....

These are obviously in tune with the integrationist objective of the national philosophy as in the Canadian situation. For some of the children particularly in the urban areas, the medium of instruction in school, which by policy should be a mother tongue, becomes their second language

thus making them bilinguals. But if Government does not "regulate and control the operation of pre-primary education as well as ensure that the staff of pre-primary institutions are adequately trained and that essential equipment is provided " as set down in the NPE Section 2 (11.5), alternative scenarios in which pupils are either taught in English or taught by less than qualified teachers are set up. These alternative scenarios seem to be the rule rather than the exception in Lagos .

The past two decades or so have witnessed a proliferation of nursery schools particularly in towns and cities. This may be an indication that nursery schools operation is a lucrative business except that shares are not on the stock market yet! Society attaches value tags to these commercialised education centres and families are socially assessed on the basis of the schools their children patronise. The parameters on which the schools are ranked include amount of fees payable, part of the city where a school is situated, the quality of staffing and the socio-economic ratings of the other patrons. Children have been heard requesting "Mum, let's go to school in the Benz tomorrow please" to prove a point to the 'Joneses'. Proficiency in English and an awareness of Western values are the hallmark of attendance at such schools and the harbinger of social prestige. The shift of emphasis from the educational to the commercial objective in these schools compromises the very policy aims that give life to them. But fundamentally, this arrangement is sustained by the relative attitudes to English and the indigenous languages in society .

3.0 Socio-Economic Categorisation of Nursery Schools in Lagos

Although our focus is on private schools it is necessary to mention that there are also the traditional public school nursery classes. They are non-fee-paying and employ the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. They perform a social function in 'relieving' mothers of some responsibility as the Yoruba phrase for them "Je le o sinmi" (let the home have some peace)implies.[4] The children are taught folk tales and traditional songs which help them to discriminate acceptable from unaccaptable social behaviour. Peasant children patronise these classes.

Fee-paying nursery schools can be sub-categorised into Top Rate (TR), Medium Rate

(MR) and Bottom Rate (BR) on the basis of the parameters mentioned earlier.

First, let us consider location and patronage. Like property, the 'value' of a nursery school is upped by its location in the low-density and 'class' [5] areas of the city. In Lagos, the traditional Up Town areas are Victoria Island and Ikoyi. Both of these areas are inhabited by members of the Diplomatic Corp, topflight businessmen and high ranking bureaucrats. Their children constitute the 'market' which the proprietors explore or exploit. Recently, Opebi section of Ikeja has gained recognition as the abode of the 'nouveau riche' and has a low population density too. However the bureaucratic and diplomatic presence in Victoria Island and Ikoyi is absent here. Nonetheless the schools are nearly as costly as the former .

For the Medium Rate group, schools in Surulere, Yaba, Ebute-Metta and Festac Village provide good illustration. These areas have a higher population density and are inhabited in the main by middle level personnel from different vocations and professions. It must be added though that these parts of town have their very poor suburbs which show no great difference from Bottom Rate locations. Going by the wage and salary structures within the public service, these schools are no longer conveniently accessible to children of some previous middle class families. Children of (University) academics patronise some of these schools but under a rebate scheme.

The Bottom Rate group are located in yet higher population density areas of Mushin, Agege and Ajegunle. They are patronised by chidren of people who though value 'quality' education only have the resources for its look-alike. They do not themselves have any claim to extensive education but affect the lifestyle of those who have.

Staffing policy is similar for both TR and MR .Recruitment of teachers is limited to relevant diplomas in education, University degree, Nigerian Certificate of Education, Montessori Certificate, Professional Studies in Education Certificate among others. Some of the Headteachers in fact possess Postgraduate qualifications. In the BR the staff are a curious mixture of holders of GradeII Teacher's Certificate and GCE Ordinary Level. The main consideration is to keep the overhead cost down to maximise the profit. It costs less to engage unqualified teachers than specially trained ones. Several of these schools have sprung up in a manner similar to Evening Classes in Lagos, as money making ventures for their proprietors. Perhaps it should be mentioned that the public nursery schools are staffed with Grade Twos.

For fees, TRs are the costliest to attend, then MRs next, while BRs are at the bottom of the ladder. The distribution pattern of pupils in these nursery schools shows that BRs have the largest patronage while the TRs have the smallest and this matches the distribution of people on the socio-economic ladder .

Our observation is that the different categories of nursery schools identified above affect the course of language development in varying degrees in relation to policy objective. For instance, the TRs are farther away in their orientation from policy ideal than the BRs are. The traditional nursery schools with their present orientation are more pro-policy than the privately owned ones even though the latter are currently the 'ideal school' to the majority.

As far as the ideal conceived by the language policy objective is concerned, an overhauling of the existing model has become imperative. A model which supports the use of the English language as medium of instruction in nursery schools conflicts with policy provisions and the aims that inform their formulation. But before proffering an alternative model we shall attempt a categorisation of children according to the potentials of language skills acquisition they are exposed to.

4.0 Categories Of Children By Pre-School Language Potential

We identify for our purpose here three broad categories of children on the basis of language skills they have a potential to learn at home.

1. First, there are the monolinguals. They are of two types:

(a) Indigenous Language Monolinguals (IMs): The children of homes at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder make up this group. An indigenous language is spoken to them at home by parents who presumably have little or no education. Both parents share the same ethnic background. This is a large group .

(b) English Monolinguals (EMs): Children of elite homes in which English is the medium of interaction belong to this group. Both parents may or may not have the same ethnicity. If they do not, the children are more easliy drawn into this group.This is presumably the smallest of all the groups. For convenience, we have also lodged in this group those whom Thomas (1988) described as monoliterate bilinguals; i.e., they are spoken to in English while parents interact in

their presence in an indigenous language medium. EMs are likely to have an orientation of deculturation as defined by Berry (1983), in which case they lose their heritage language and culture but it is not certain that they have a feeling of marginality in the Nigerian situation .

2. The second group is one of bilinguals who possess and employ communicative skills in two languages. Again there are two categories of these :

(a) Indigenous Language Bilinguals (IIs): Children in this group have two indigenous languages at their disposal . On one hand, they could be from elite homes with parents in an inter-ethnic union and so are introduced to the mother tongues of their parents. This is not likely to be as commonplace as 1(b) above as the adoption of English is an easier alternative. On the other hand, both parents may be uneducated but bilingual themselves in their two languages which they simultaneously teach the children .

(b) Indigenous + English Language Bilinguals (IEs): Most of the children in this group are from middle-income homes in which an indigenous language, probably that of one or both parents, and the English language are freely used with the children. This will be a more feasible occurrence if it is an inter-racial union . In 2(a) and 2(b), The Grammont-Formula of "Une personne, Une langue" would account for the emerging bilingual pattern .

3. The third and final group is closest to the ideal that the language policy pursues. It is a blend of 1(b) and 2(a), i.e., a trilingual with two indigenous languages and the English language. We can not associate the group with a particular socio-economic stratum easily. As the most ideal-like, it should have a prestige value higher than all the other groups. But society's current value orientation ascribes greater prestige to English monolingualism arguably because of its rating in the educational and work spheres.

In order to bring the policy ideal into perspective, society's value orientation has to change in such a way that the indigenous languages are cast in those progressive roles which English alone fulfils now.

If we reduce the information above to graph as in Fig.1, the conflict between the current language skills model and policy position may be better appreciated.

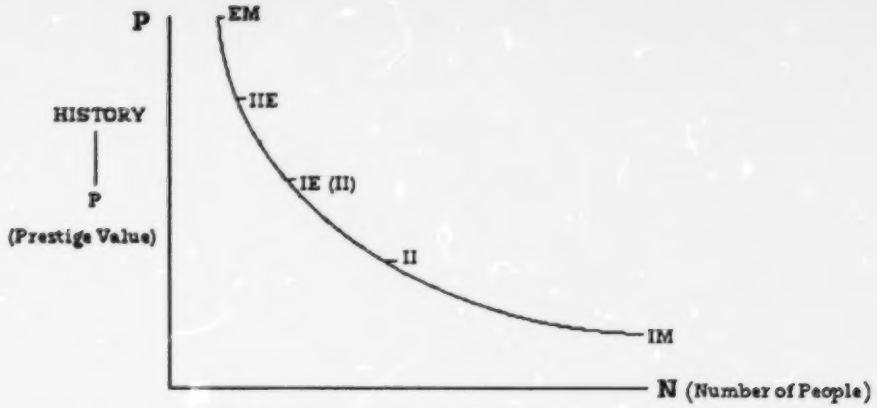

FIG.1

The curve shows that majority of Nigerians are monolingual in an indigenous language (IM) and they belong to the lower rungs of the Prestige axis which is also synonymous with socio-economic rating. The other end of the curve shows the high value attached to English monolingualism while the population on the Y- axis confirms that it is a feature of "class" and a "privilege". This skill is often acquired at high costs. EMs would definitely go to an English medium TR. IMs would on the contrary go to a non-fee-paying public nursery school in which their mother tongues are also the media of instruction.

Indigenous language bilinguals (IIs) are potential/prospective pupils of traditional public nursery schools except for those of them who come from middle class homes and may go to MR schools where they would learn English formally and become trilinguals. This sub-category of IIs may attract as much prestige value as the Indigenous and English Language Bilinguals (IEs). There is a logical expectation that IEs would have a higher prestige rating than EMs because English is common to both categories with the former gaining the bilingual "advantage". However, the indigenous language seems to have a scaling down effect on the prestige status that English attracts . The same argument holds for those with two indigenous languages and English language.

What has become very clear from all this is that the values attached to the language skill-type, the different types of nursery schools and their clientele are a function of attitudes in society which are manipulated to project and protect a discriminatory broad-based triangular class structure. The ideal that this structure presents differs from that of the National Language Policy. In order to streamline values with objectives of policy, attitude orientation has to change. As we

discussed earlier, EMs are to be found in the homes of bureaucrats. TRs are set up to sustain them. The irony is that the same bureaucrats are responsible for policy formulation and implementation. It is clear that the appropriate policies are formulated but the spate of implementation is suspect.

As Oksaar(1989) said, monolingualism not bilingualism *or even multilingualism*[6] is the problem of the world today. A bureaucracy that recognises this will trade in the current model and supervise effective implementation of the policy. In other words, the bureaucracy itself needs to be reorientated on this issue. That a language expert heads the Education Ministry is encouraging on this account. But attitudes change over time, particularly on such issues as the direction of language development. The life-span of Cabinet Ministers and therefore the policies they promote does not often fit into the time -span for attitude change. This is a problem .

5.0 New Attitude, New Value, New Model .

Samuelson and Nordhaus (1989) maintain that 'in a market system, everything has a price'; whether commodity or service. That is, the language skill-types discussed earlier, in an economic analysis, would have different market values determined by certain established criteria. These criteria are fixed, based on the value system of the consumer group. Since we have argued that there is a need to cause attitude change to reorientate society's values, let us consider methods by which this objective can be met .

Firstly, the Directorate for Social Mobilisation (MAMSER)[7] could add the responsibility of promoting Nigeria's indigenous languages to its portfolio. Secondly, Public Enlightenment Units of Local Government Administration can also be deployed to mount campaigns to encourage parents to revive and pass on to their children with a cultural heritage that projects their identities. Cultural exchange programmes can then be organised among regions of the Country. This will serve in establishing positive attitudes towards other ethnic groups, cultures and their languages which is a condition for promoting bilingualism (Taylor, 1987). Monolingualism should be denounced and derided to motivate people further to become bilingual .

It is only when these measures have been taken that Government can attempt to monitor language policy implementation. In this regard, we have mentioned the special role of formal

school and of the advantaged position of nursery schools in the school system. Effective monitoring of private nursery schools would have to be carried out constantly to ensure that their philosophies agree with the Nation's educational philosophy. This monitoring will be enhanced if Government goes ahead to implement the 1991 Seminar recommendation that model mother tongue nursery schools should be established to encourage the use of mother tongues and languages of the immediate community as media of instruction.

Government should accept the advice to commit funds to the development of the indigenous languages to finally prepare them for use in official communicative situations.This would improve their statuses a great deal.The gains of agencies such as the British Council, the Goethe Institute and the French Cultural Centre in the promotion of English, German and French languages, and their respective cultures justify such a call on a local level .

Having discussed attitude change and value reorientation, let us now return to the language skill-types identified earlier and attempt to attach relative value and prestige tags to them. This evaluation must take cognisance of the main objective of the National Language Policy i.e., the promotion of multilingualism in aid of better national integration .

The two monolingual groups, EMs and IMs, would have the least value and such skills would have been discouraged at the attitude-change stage. However, IMs would have an edge over EMs because they are still better placed in functioning within the new social and cultural order .

The two bilingual groups, IEs and IIs, would have greater value and attract more prestige rating than the previous two. But again IIs would have a higher rating than IEs from the perspective of policy which instructs that pupils be taught another indigenous language in addition to their mother tongues. It is thought that this group would produce those at the peak of the curve, the trilinguals, when English is learned. Now, since both English and the second indigenous language are to be learnt formally within the school system, the population of the two bilingual groups would be smaller than that of the IM monolingual group until such a time when the Compulsory Primary Education Scheme is effectively implemented. It is speculated that the IEs would be made up of people who dread the possibility of being assimilated into another group .

It is also speculated that the private nursery schools would modify their 'commodities' to reflect the new thinking. They may remain competitive but such a competition would be based on the levels of competence and proficiency they offer to bilingual clients on their curriculum . Society

may then fall into socio-economic blocks on the basis of the quality of language 'products' people can afford . Fig.2 illustrates this new model .

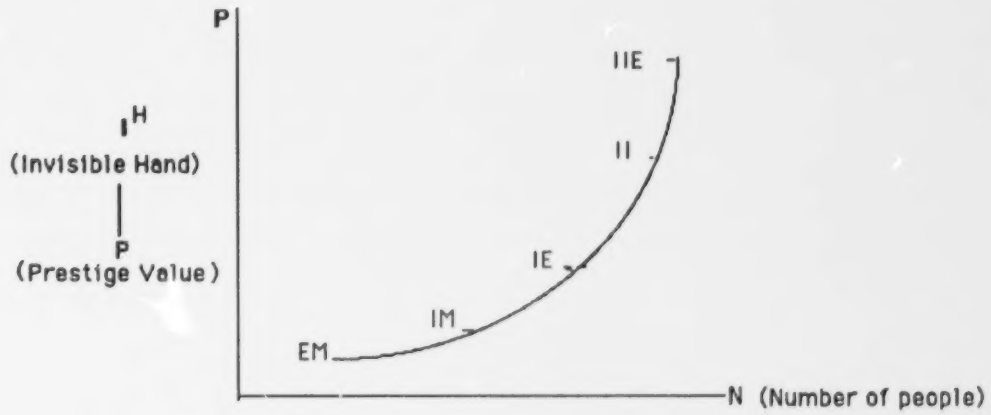

FIG. 2

Considering the different official manipulations that would result in this reordering of values, we can say that Government functions like Adam Smith's 'Invisible Hand' which leads people 'to achieve the best good for all' while pursuing their 'personal good' . We can express the main argument of this model with a simple equation:

$$I^H (X^I + X^I) > X^E > (X^I + X^I)$$

where I^H is the Invisible Hand, X^I represents indigenous language and X^E, English. The efficiency of the Invisible Hand is variable. We must remark that the 'fall' of EM from the peak of Fig. 1 to the bottom of Fig. 2 is not indicative of a potential reduction in the importance of English in Nigeria but of depreciation in the value of monolingual skill in a second language. We do not therefore share Adejare's (1992) fear that 'English might suffer an eventual rankshift in status from that of a second language to a language used only for performing marginally specialised functions.' An upgrading of the indigenous languages to a prestige status is not synonymous with

a downgrading of a medium that would continue to share unifying roles with some Nigerian languages and also serve useful purposes in international transactions .

6.0 Prospecting For The New Bilingual Trend

We have shown in the previous section that the 'new' bilingualism would be characterised by usage skills in two indigenous languages. Our intention now is to discuss what language combination has the greatest prospect .

It is often the pattern that minority groups have a greater motivation to learn the language(s) of majority groups than vice-versa. The Constitution and the NPE probably only give institutional support to this sociolinguistic reality when they name Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo ,Nigeria's three National Languages. These three have the largest population of indigenous speakers in the Country .

In working out the probable language combinations, we identify two spheres: the Minority Language Sphere (MLS) and the National Language Sphere (NLS). People who operate within the MLS have a minority language mother tongue and would acquire the National Language in their region or State as a second language .

Within the traditional Northern, Eastern and Western regions, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are regional lingua francas and so minority languages in the regions may be combined with any of these as appropriate .

On the other hand, people who operate within the NLS have a National Language mother tongue and may learn one of the other two National Languages as a second language .

In view of demographic, economic and political realities, Hausa appears to be the most favoured as an additional indigenous language.[8] It is understandable therefore that speakers of Igbo and Yoruba would readily learn Hausa. In addition Hausa is already an international language spoken in the north of five West African countries; It is also a medium of transmission on BBC's Africa Service. This relative advantage of Hausa is confirmed by Mann's (1991) sociolinguistic profiles of Nigeria's major language options in which Hausa scores next highest to English .

The most functional bilingual from the national perspective subsequently would be one

who possesses his mother tongue and Hausa. This can be expressed in terms of the Theory of Utility in Economics :

(a) $U (X^I , X^H) > U (X^I , X^I)$

(b) $(X^I , X^H) > (X^I , X^I)$

The implication of (a) is that the combination of Hausa and any other indigenous language has a greater utility value than any other two combinations of indigenous languages. Consequently as shown in (b), preference for this greater utility bilingual combination will be expressed by the majority. This may have implications for bilingual development among Hausa mother tongue populations. Low motivation seems likely to be a major problem as there would be no practical need for them to learn another language with everybody else speaking Hausa. It would appear therefore, that the new model encourages Hausa monolingualism. But the effect of the Invisible Hand would have put this in check. Besides, the school system, if properly monitored, would ensure widespread bilingualism among school populations.

Finally, it is not thought that the Hausa language and culture would be sufficiently overbearing at any point to turn the other ethnic communities into 'seige cultures' as Baker (1973), reported for French Canadians in their struggle to preserve their ethnic identity when faced with threats of Anglo - American domination and assimilation .

7.0 Conclusion

Nothing could be more appropriate than the policy of multilingualism that Nigeria seeks to pursue considering her multi-ethnic composition. But a few things have to be put in order for an effective implementation of such a policy. Government encouragement of private participation in the provision of certain levels of education[9] especially pre-primary education without proper

monitoring will confine policy to paper forever. Private institutions draw up curricula to suit the taste and demand of their target consumers in order to remain in business. They help to perpetrate English monolingualism which is a mark of class. This taste as it concerns language development conflicts with policy which has been informed by overall national development. High costs of attendance at privately-owned pre-primary schools make them accessible to only a select and privileged few. The majority patronise the public schools but desire and aspire to the 'ideal' which they deem is attainable from the private schools. The problem with government policy as it stands now is that it does not express the desires of the people. Considering that, as Sumner (1906) says, 'Stateways are not Folkways' a reordering is evidently necessary. In order to install a model that would promote the present policy, the Invisible Hand must intervene. If it does so successfully, the same popular aspiration that buoys up English monolingualism now will devalue it and provide support for multilingualism. The indigenous languages will receive a boost in status without a concurrent loss in the value of English. In the end, the price tag on each bilingual combination is determined by its utility value across both Minority and National Language Spheres in the country .

NOTES

1. Paper presented at Sociolinguistic Symposium 9. 2-4 April, 1992. University of Reading, Reading, U.K.
2. See Ridler, N.B. and S. Pons-Ridler (1986).They present an economic analysis of Canadian language policies and argue that government intervention is necessary in promoting a minority language. This intervention, they suggest should be in the form of demand rather than supply manipulation.
3. My emphasis.
4. They are alternatively called 'Oloorun' that is 'Sleepers' probably because this is a common feature of such classes.
5. A Nigerianism for ' high status ' .
6. My addition.
7. MAMSER - Mass Mobilisation for Social Justice and Economic Recovery.
8. There is perhaps an attitude dimension to this preference pattern as well. There seems to be a concensus of opinion among sections of the South that the Hausa and Northerners generally are ' easy-going ' , ' trustworthy ' , 'kind and sympathetic '.
9. Government allows private participation in the provision of education up to secondary school level .

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